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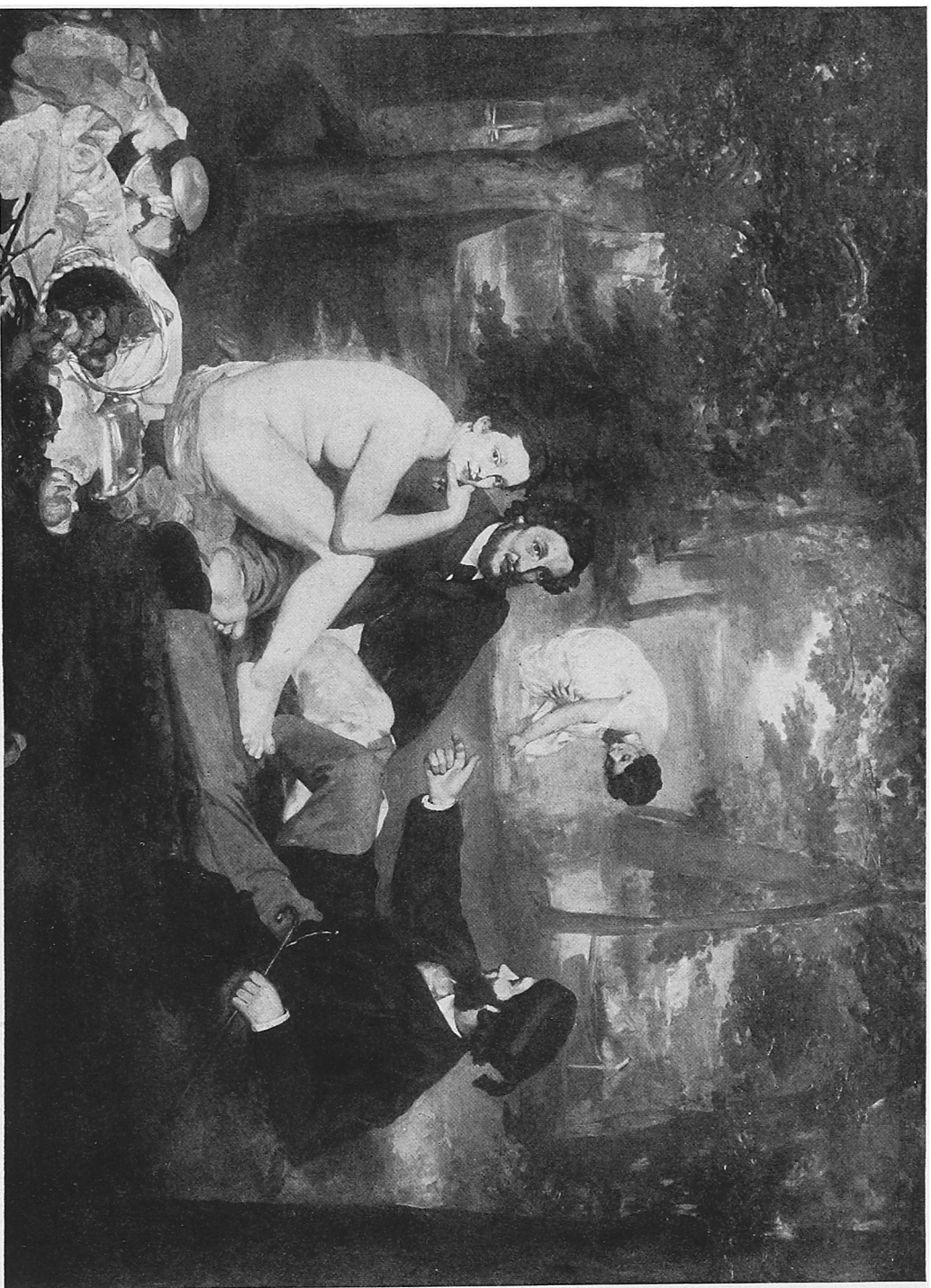
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LE DÉJEUNER SUR L'HERBE
By Édouard Manet



LA LEÇON DE MUSIQUE (1870), M. ZACHARIE ASTRUC
By Édouard Manet

—Collection M. Henri Rouart

The Master Impressionists

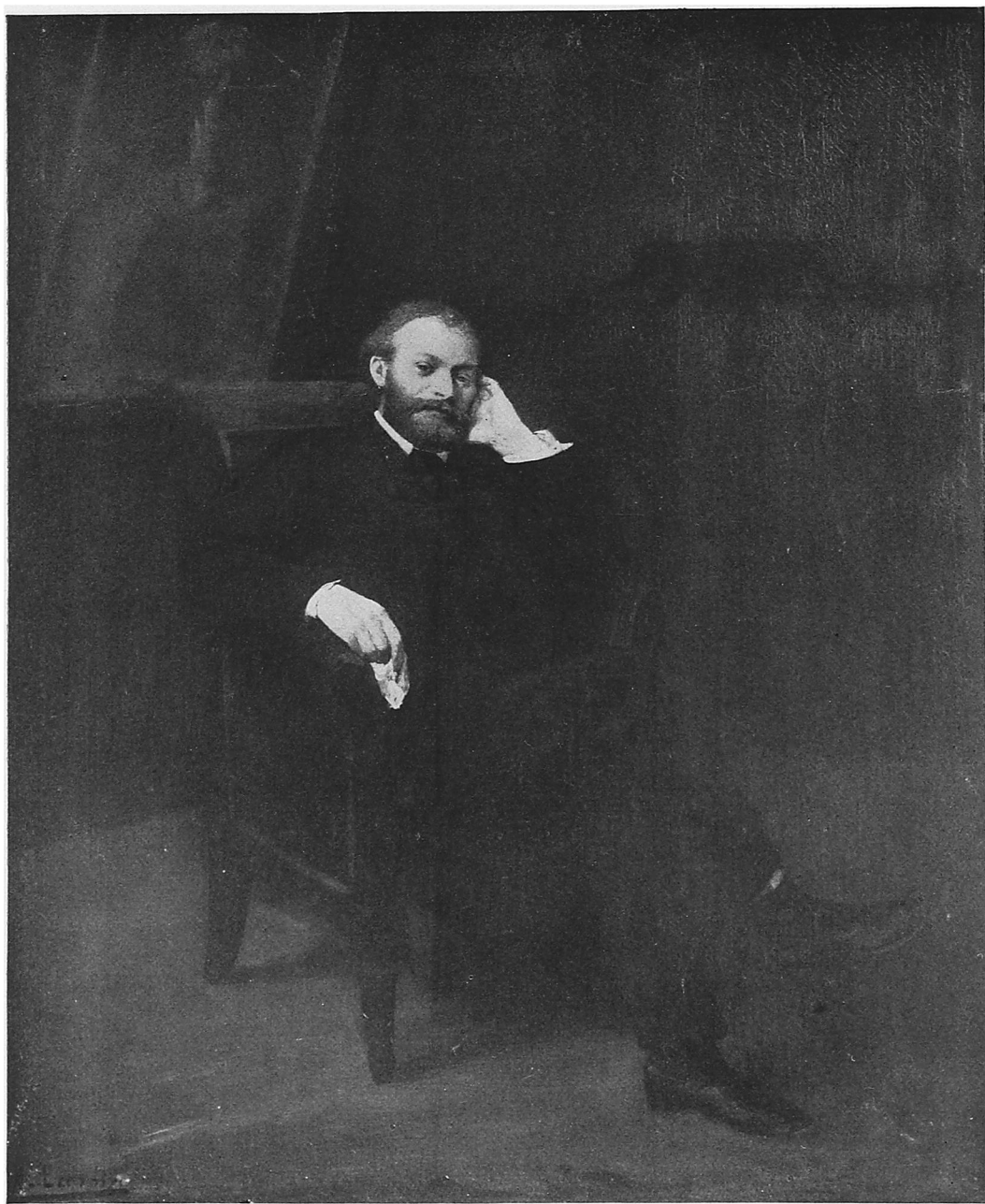
[Chapter II]

By CHARLES LOUIS BORGMAYER

IN THIS little preliminary glimpse we have had of the men, not yet formed into a group, in this year of 1862, there has been a surprising similarity. They were all strong men mentally, who had all had a thorough training in academic rules, even if they did not follow them. They reacted against conventions; they joined in the revolt against Romanticism and enrolled themselves under Courbet's banner, then fell at the feet of Corot.

In each step they took, the master was the initiator and it was through his eyes

that they saw nature for the time being, but never in the same fashion, for each had something to say for himself. Take as an example Courbet and Manet. If we had the time and space we could take any one of the others as a peg to hang the talk upon. Courbet was trying to effect in figure painting the same transformation that had taken place in landscape under the influence of the English school. His work was also a revolt against the conventions, but his figures were not living, his waves were at a standstill, and that was not as Manet



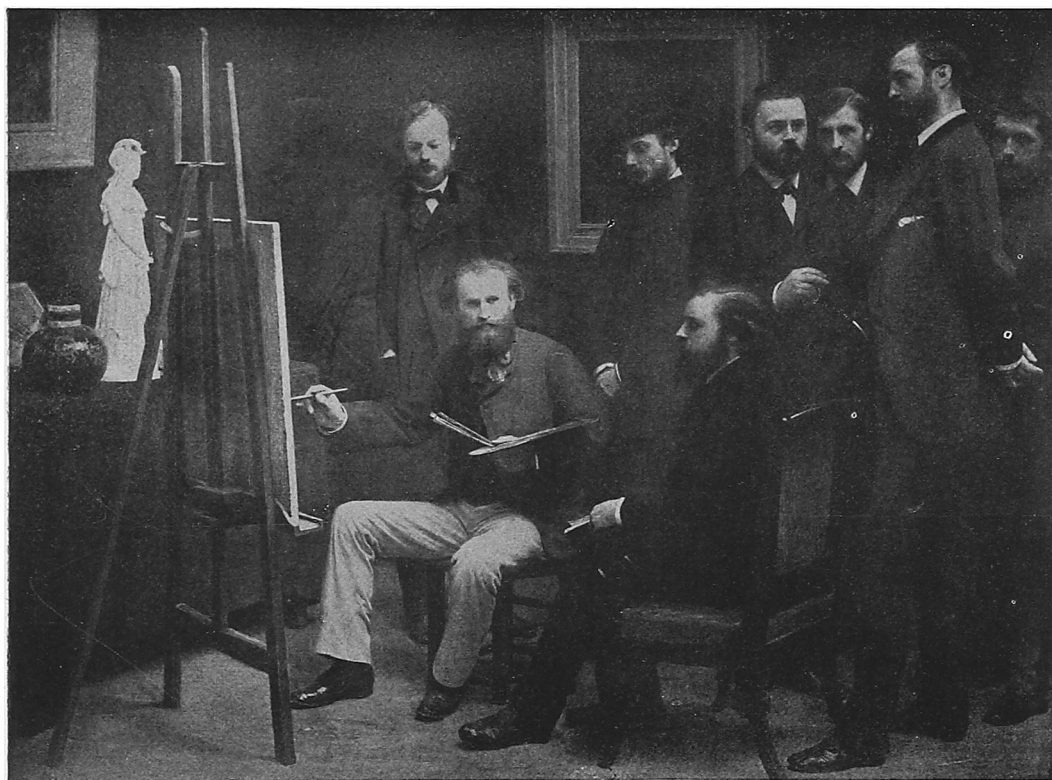
Portrait d'Édouard Manet
By Alphonse Legros

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais

saw either waves or figures. Probably neither did Courbet, but Manet's power of selection and his use of colors to create the impression he wished was greater than Courbet's, and so he went beyond Courbet in his expression of life or the reality of things and people. Then, too, Manet saw life as a nobler thing than Courbet, and so purged Courbet's realism of some of its grossness. Later on Courbet said of one of Manet's pictures, "*The Olympia*," that it was like the Queen of Spades coming from a bath. Manet answered that Courbet's ideal of art was a billiard ball. These gentle remarks would lead one to imagine that Manet's admiration for Courbet had soon ceased.

We could go on indefinitely with these comparisons, for critics find affiliation between each of the Impressionists and men

of other times. When they say that the first manner of Manet was analogous with a Goya, Velasquez and Hals, that Renoir's art comes straight from Watteau and Boucher, that Claude Monet is a descendant of Claude Lorraine and rivals Turner, or that Berthe Morisot has inherited the palette of Fragonard, or even that Degas came from David and Ingres, they do not mean that one would confound the work of these masters. That they have descended from some one can hardly be held against them as a reproach, seeing that every painter has always had a precursor, a support upon whom he has based his beginnings. A great artist, whatever may be his origin, does not draw everything from himself. He only creates new resources for his art, broadens the territory and works differently from his predecessors. He sub-

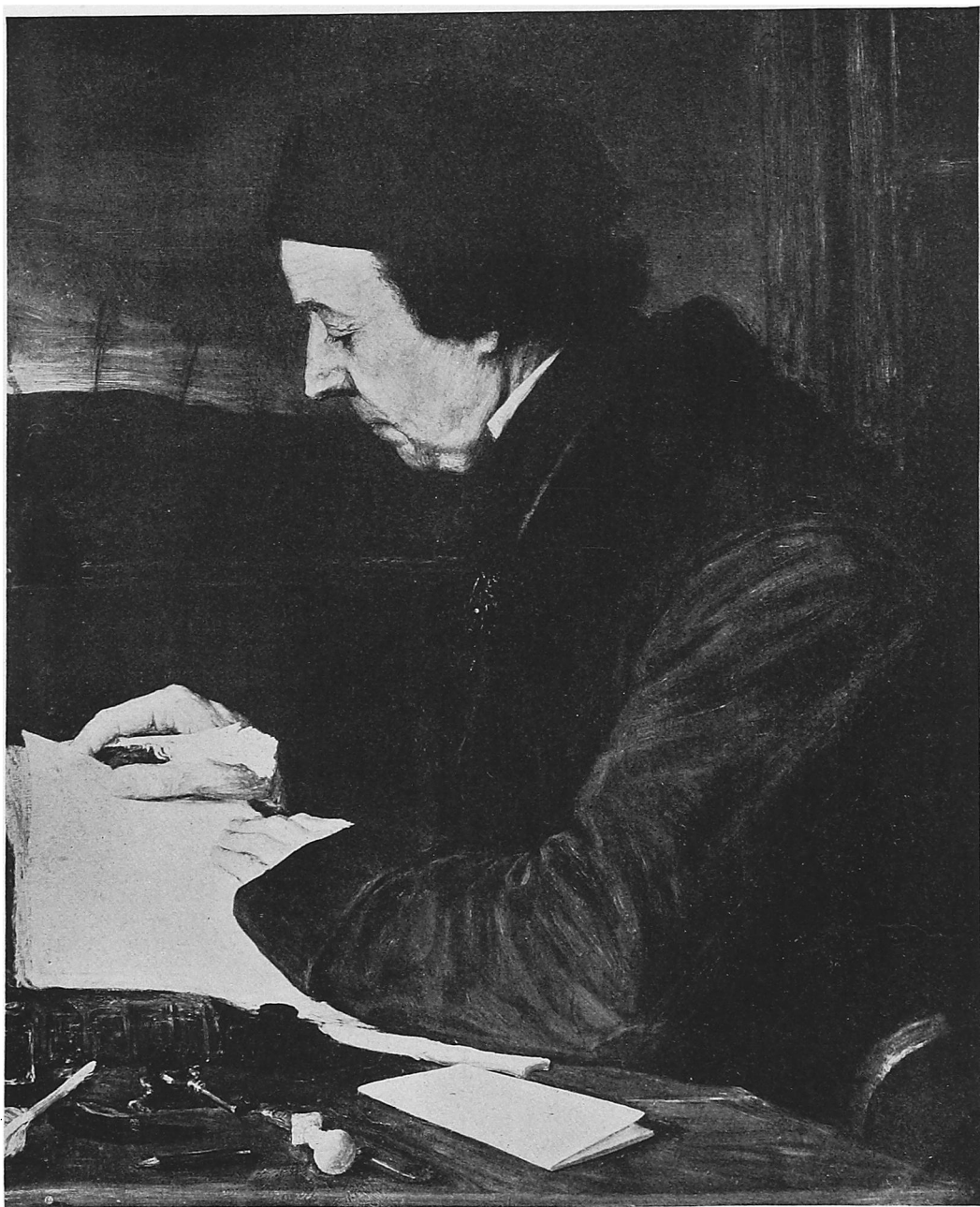


Reading from left to right (upper row): Scholderer, Renoir, Zola, Maitre.

Bazille, Monet; (lower row): Manet, Artruc.

L'ATELIER DES BATIGNOLLES
By Fantin-Latour

—Courtesy Musée du Luxembourg



PORTRAIT DU PÈRE DE L'ARTISTE
By Alphonse Legros

—Courtesy Musée de Tour

mits to many influences, that of his ancestors and his immediate surroundings not being the least among them. The influence of the education, good or bad, that he received, is a great factor, and favors or retards the blossoming of his natural talents.

Pictures have been painted since the Egyptians first perpetuated history by decorating their tombs and palace walls, to say nothing of the Arabic, Indian, Chinese and Persian efforts. For centuries upon centuries men have yearned to express their love for the beauty of the human form, for growing grass and trees, for moving clouds, and the wonder is that there is anything left to discover sufficiently new, astonishing or shocking to make the public sit up and take notice.

We now find our young men drawing together through their friendships, made at the Louvre, at Gleyre's or through their visits to Fontainebleau. Each in his own way was seeking to continue and complete the task of reproducing nature that Rousseau, Corot, Troyon and Millet had started.

It was in the next year, 1863, that a movement of artistic independence arose and sent up a protest against the powers that be, because of the wholesale refusals of admittance at the Salons. It was then Napoleon III stepped in and commanded that they be allowed to exhibit, by themselves, if necessary. This exhibition was called the "*Salon des Refusés*" and was held in the same building as the Salon. Paris laughed itself into hysterics over the canvases of such men as Claude Monet, Manet, Whistler, Cazin, Harpignies, Pissarro, Renoir, Degas, Cézanne, Fantin-Latour, Jongkind, Legros, Bracquemond, and others. It is no wonder that today the public is afraid of making another mistake and so goes to the other extreme, accepting many pictures that ought to cause hysterics. Manet's offering to the *Salon des Refusés* was a subject of Giorgione adapted to our time. It was first called "*Le bain*" but is

now known as "*Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*." It was the bringing together of the nude and modern costume, a thing both Courbet and Fantin had tried without causing the horror that this picture did. In it Manet tried to express life rather than beauty. There was no effort to attain higher imaginary qualities, no effort to ennoble the subject, just a frank, fearless, decisive statement on canvas of his impression of a scene that would shock one if run into unexpectedly, just as the picture shocks many now as it hangs in the Moreau-Nélaton Collection. You must remember that the public was accustomed at that time to the idealized nudes, very different, indeed, from these two women, the one



ETUDE DE NU
By Fantin-Latour

—Collection Moreau
—Courtesy Musée des Arts Décoratifs



L'ENFANT AU CHIEN
By Edouard Manet

splashing in the water of the river, the other seated on the bank near two young men (the one on the left was a portrait of Armand Gouzone, critic, and Inspector of the Beaux-Arts). The men in their dark coats form a background for the white flesh of the seated woman. They are evidently waiting for the bather to join them before commencing the feast spread before them. Some noise has startled them, perhaps the click of the camera, and they all look towards the intruder.

The whole picture offended, chiefly in the subject, but the rules of the day were outraged too. It was painted all in full light, the old-falsified shadows, that should have opposed the light, were not there. The parts that others painted in shadow were painted by tones less bright, but always in value. He had raised the key of the whole picture, for as soon as he heightened the pitch of a too low color, he was forced to heighten all the rest in exact proportion, or lose the proper values, for each color was affected by its neighbors, which made the

work, in its lightness, incongruous in the midst of the other sombre and discolored pictures. It flew at the eyes.

At this time there was taught in the schools a certain manner in which to distribute the light and shade. No one thought of painting light without the obligatory accompaniment of shade. Shadows had been considered merely as parts fitted to make the lighted portions more brilliant and were put in with red or blackish color—a tone without transparency. Manet painted light on light, different tones side by side without any transition.

Duret explains this so very much more clearly than I can that I take the liberty of quoting him rather fully. "According to the teaching of the studios, in order to fix the perspectives, to obtain modeling in the masses and to give their just value to certain parts of the picture, it was necessary to use certain combinations of light and shade. Above all it was held that a number of bright tones ought not to be put side by side without graduation, and that the



LA MUSIQUE AUX TUILERIES
By Édouard Manet



OLYMPIA
By Edouard Manet

—Courtesy Musée du Louvre

transition from the bright passages to those less bright ought to be graduated in such a way that the shades should soften the abruptness of the contrast and blend the whole together. But observe where the technique of the studios had led. Nothing indeed is rarer than the artist who is really able to paint light, to put the brilliance of day on canvas; and so this technique of a constant opposition of shade and make-believe light had led to the production of works which were really all shadow, from which all true light had disappeared. The parts that were supposed to be light were too feeble to stand out from the surrounding black of the shadows. This effect of gloom prevailed in almost all of the pictures of the time. Joyousness of color, brilliance of clear light, the feeling of the open air, the spirit of laughing nature, had disappeared from them."

This was the beginning of the bitter war that the Impressionists waged against bitumen and obscurity, and by its winning they revolutionized the French painters' palette.

The artistic interest of this picture "*Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*" is great, whether we like it or not, for it is a good example of the distinct, flat, rich values within a general tone, which are the distinguishing features of Manet's work. It is also Manet's first example of the quivering light that he brought to such full force later on in his "*Argenteuil*."

Soon after this Manet exhibited the "*Olympia*" now hanging in the Louvre. The public raged. Even Manet himself felt dubious about sending it, but was persuaded by his friend, the poet Baudelaire, to do so. It caused the Salon doors to be vindictively closed to him and made him a much-talked-of young man, if not in an altogether pleasant fashion.

The "*Olympia*" is a picture of a nude woman with flesh far more brilliant

than artists were painting flesh at that time. She is stretched out and leaning on her elbow on a yellowish shawl, slightly figured with flowers. Back of her stands a negress holding a bouquet of brilliant tones, at her feet a black cat forms a bold note of contrast to the white draperies and pink flesh. This "*Olympia*" is a short woman, with a hard, little, vicious head, a face totally empty of expression. She is thinking of nothing; even the bouquet does not interest her. She is posed. Manet meant her to be real; in fact, reality was the sole reason for this picture, but as has been said by some clever critic, it is not a real reality but a made reality. Manet arranged the draperies and the greens, the blues and the reds, and then saw them with his own peculiar sight. It is



POURTRAIT DE MLLE. J. S.
By Édouard Manet



PORTRAIT OF THEODORE DURET
By Édouard Manet

not a picture of a real woman who happened to drop into this position to rest, but a picture of a model placed on the couch by Manet, in order that he might paint her. There is intelligence of the eye, but there is also the hunt for reality. It is superbly drawn and reveals irreproachable purity of line.

In "*Olympia*," as in "*Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*," he substituted an opposition of different tones for the fixed opposition of light and shade. The subject is placed in full light as though a great window were behind the painter. Because the face had no expression the public put an expression in it, and called her names; they gave extra interest to the cat, which really had no more

interest in it than a spot, but that the picture was insistently vulgar was the feeling of many and there was a great deal of opposition to its acceptance when it was purchased, in 1890, by a committee of admirers of Manet and offered to the State; after much wrangling it was accepted. It now hangs in the Louvre opposite Ingres' "*Odalisque*," the first of the Impressionists to enter the Louvre's sacred precincts. Zola has written a masterly description of "*Olympia*" in his "*Mes Haines*."

The terrific notoriety and abuse hurled at Manet closed the official doors against him, but on the other hand drew some of the younger spirits to him. There were his friends of the Louvre, Mlle. Morisot and Degas. Claude Monet visited, in the spring of 1863, an exhibition of fourteen works that Manet held on the *Boulevard des Italiens*. This was his undoing, or doing,

as you please. He did not meet Manet personally until 1866, when Zacharie Astruc took him to Manet's studio, where they formed a quick but lasting friendship.

As Manet drew Claude Monet, so Claude Monet drew Sisley and his studio companions, Renoir and Bazille, into the gradually enlarging circle of friends. Cézanne had looked up his friend Zola when he came to Paris, and they were now living together, and it was through talks with Cézanne that Zola had undertaken the campaign for Manet and his ideas. Manet was naturally pleased with Zola's friendship, although distressed at the trouble it brought Zola in the beginning.

With Cézanne and Zola came Guillaumin

of the *Académie Suisse*; Pissarro, struck by "*The Olympia*," hastened to make Manet's acquaintance, and there was Gustavé Caillebotte, an amateur, who helped them so materially in the beginning by buying their pictures.

These men, drawn from different parts of Paris, wished to meet regularly. Manet's studio would have been the natural place, but it was far from central and nothing but a ruin, so that was impossible. Near Manet's home was the *Café Guerbois*, in the Batignolles quarter, on Avenue Clichy. Groups met there every evening, accidentally at first, but regularly after 1866.

The group enlarged until it included many earnest members. One saw there frequently Fantin-Latour, Guillemet; the engravers Desboutsins and Belot; Duranty, novelist and critic; Zacharie Astruc, sculp-

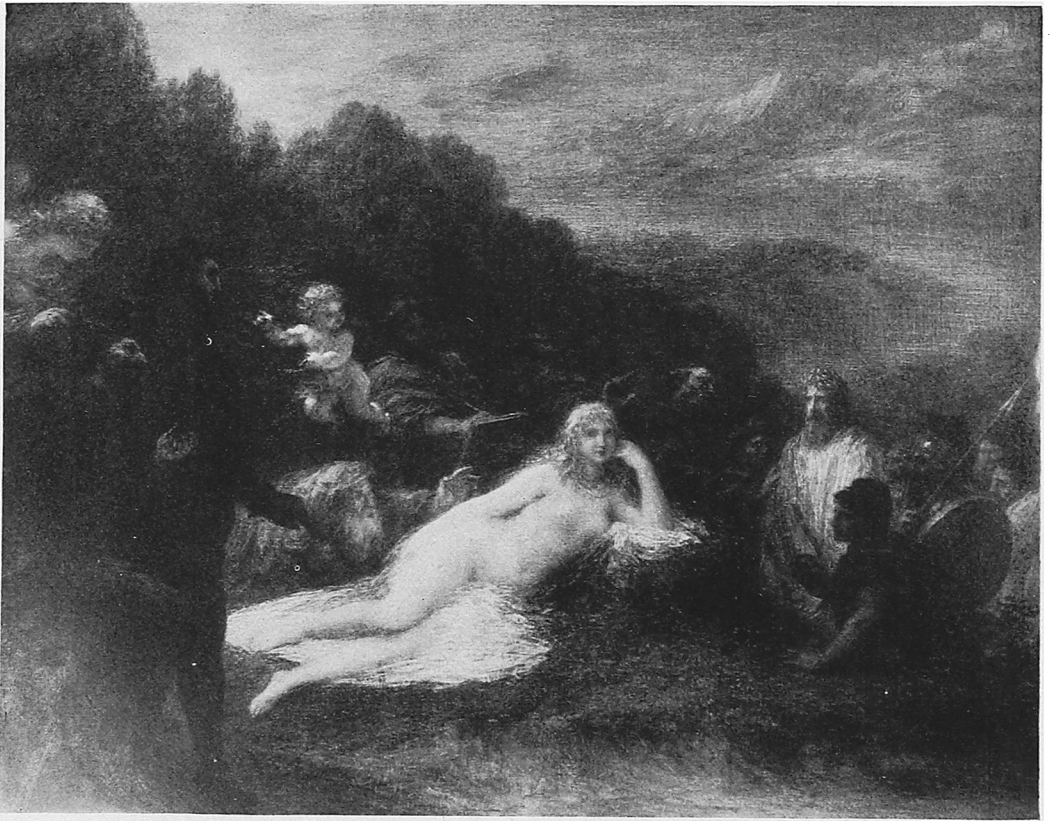
tor and poet; Émile Zola and Cladel, the novelist; Degas and Stevens, Vignaud and Burty, l'Hermitte, Scholderer, Maitre and others. Then deserters from all camps such as Boudin, Lépine, Bracquemond, Boullard, Cals, Gustave Colin, de Nittis, Raffaëlli, Lebourg, Forain and La Touche, Berthe Morisot and Mary Cassatt.

Their one trait in common was their revolt against art and literature. They had little in common in character. Their different personalities separated them and they were of vastly different ages. Pissarro. Manet and Degas were the oldest of our particular men. Claude Monet was about twenty-six, eight years younger than Manet. Renoir was the wit, the man of many sides. Sisley the official, half dreary, good natured, easy-going clerk. Cézanne was heavy-witted, heavy-handed, slow moving,



FEMME EFFILANT DE L'ETOUPE
By Félix Adolph Cals

—Courtesy Musée du Louvre



HELENE (FAUST)
By Fantin-Latour

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais

but intense, often taciturn; sometimes mystifying with his mixture of candor and malice, a boy in whom was concentrated the force of the southern spirit.

Manet was the leader; he was the dominating influence; it was his verve and his witticisms and his strong artistic opinions that gave tone to the discussion that they started in all the *naïveté* and enthusiasm of their youth. Zola was one of the most intrepid, the mouthpiece of the younger tendencies; a little bizarre, perhaps, but plainly showing himself as a champion for his friend Manet, the persecuted artist, rejected of the Salons, dishonored according to the tenets of official art. Zola was his champion from the first and Manet's pictures are in a sense Zola's books on canvas. In this group around Manet there were

some who followed him directly, among them Éva Gonzalès, his pupil, who left Chaplin to follow him.

The years of meetings at the *Café Guerbois* in familiar sittings were of great importance in the forming of the school of Impressionism. They all profited by the exchange of ideas and the encouragement they received from each other in the hard fight they were making. Manet's free and strong manner and his light and luminous tones influenced them all, more or less, although some held tenaciously to Corot's palette. Claude Monet, Pissarro and the judicious Sisley were of these. They worked in Corot's gray tones. Pissarro and Berthe Morisot clung especially to Corot's notion of the importance of values. Each one brought something. In the exchange

of ideas, they advanced individually but all together. No one man did it all. They began to be jeeringly called "*The School of the Batignolles*" because of these meetings at the *Café Guerbois*. As a souvenir of this time and a very valuable one, too, because of the faithful portraits of those who are represented, is a picture painted by Fantin-Latour under the title of "*L'Atelier aux Batignolles*" (1870) now hanging in the Luxembourg.

This picture shows Manet painting at an easel, and around him are the others, Claude Monet, Renoir, Bazille and the men of letters who defended them, Zola and Zacharie Astruc. Of course painting them in a studio was an artistic license, for they never met in this way, but at the *Café Guerbois*.

When Manet painted his *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*" (1863) he was trying to paint his figures in light; he was not satisfied with the light in his studio so he went outdoors and made notations direct from nature and then returned to his studio and painted from the notations, as many other good artists had done and were still doing. Constable, Watts and Turner in England, Courbet and Corot, had often done this, but even this almost direct painting from nature failed to express what Manet and the others were striving for. They saw that their masses founded on these notations, or on indoor light, failed to express the glittering impression of sunlight that they saw all about them, so the discussions at the *Café Guerbois* hinged on light, its intensity and the general question of luminosity.

In love with reality, they went to excess. They wished to paint each person or thing in its own natural surroundings. Up to this time Manet had not paid much attention to the figure in relation to its lighting out of doors, but while visiting in the country with his artist friend, de Nittis, he painted a portrait of Madam de Nittis, seated in her garden, surrounded by flower beds and with a background of trees, a real out-of-door picture. Many authorities say that the *plein air* movement sprang into existence with this picture.

They all went out of doors to paint, where, as some wag said, they had "sun-stroke." As I have already said, others had



L'AUTOMNE, PORTRAIT DE FEMME (MÉRY LAURENT)

By Édouard Manet

—Courtesy Musée de Nancy



ÉTUDE DE LA JEUNE FILLE
By Félix Adolph Cals

—Courtesy Musée du Louvre

painted out of doors before this, but soon after this Claude Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, Guillaumin and Renoir confined themselves exclusively to painting out of doors, while Manet did, or did not, as pleased him. In the summers he painted numerous pictures of the shore and sea at Boulogne, and one picture painted of the Universal Exposition from the top of the Trocadero is of this time. Claude Monet started to work at luminous tones as early as 1865. Renoir soon commenced to give subtle and strong effects of light. His "*Lise*" of 1868—a portrait of a woman in a light dress under the trees—was his first out-of-door portrait.

It is just here that Impressionism proper begins. Manet had given them the idea of light tones unembarrassed by shade, and they had gone out of doors to paint. That was enough of a start for men who were

out for reality. It was not long before they made startling discoveries and tried to follow them to their logical conclusions. They made daily excursions into the suburbs, or to Montmartre, or to the nearby woods. Studying nature all the time, they soon began to see the fallacies of the indoor painter. From then on the evolution seems so simple, so natural; they did not find the "noble" subjects of the academies posed in the places they frequented, so painted the subjects they did find, painted them in their natural surroundings. This called down upon their heads the wrath of the public. Then when they found the subject, time was flying and probably the small boy was curious. At any rate they were more hurried than in the studio and were forced to let the details slide, which led to the impres-

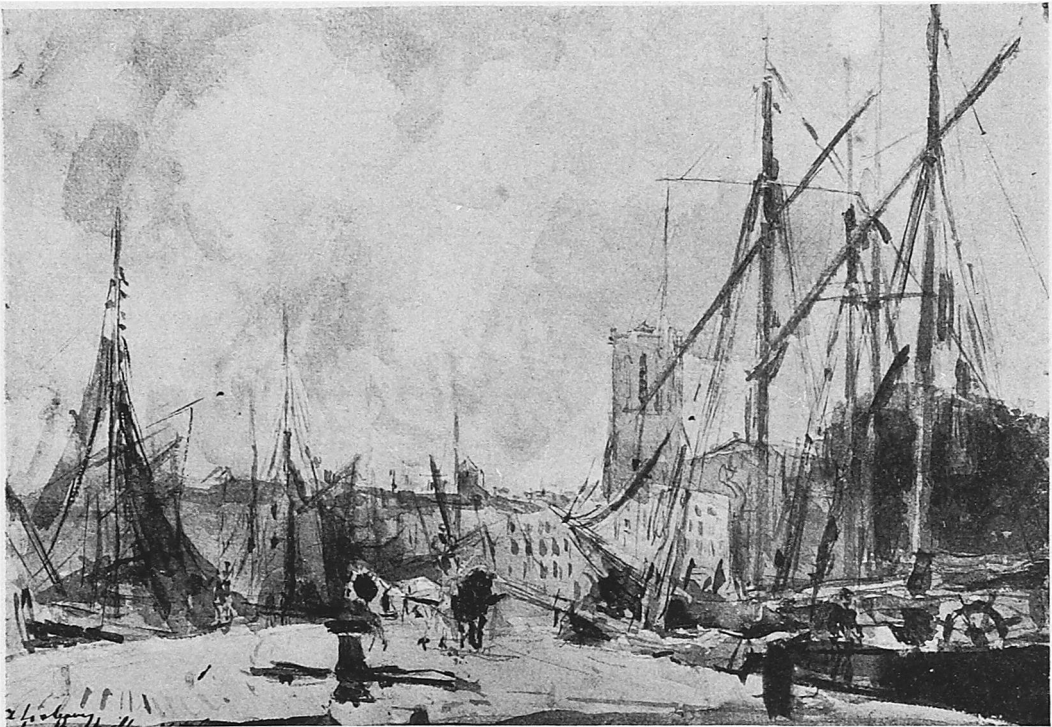
sion of the scene as it struck the eye, rather than a detailed account of it. In their haste there could be no carefully arranged subject with minute execution; they could only try for the fleeting impression of the moment, which they strove to substitute for the composition. In doing this there was often a big touch but wavering contour, a confusion of planes which suppressed the horizon and the effects of perspective. Many of the older masters had an intimate knowledge of perspective, of distances, of the architecture of great trees, of their volumes and of their foliage. They painted the poetry, the soul of the landscapes, and not the fugitive appearance that our men were struggling to catch. It is in this that the Impressionists differed from Claude Lorraine, Poussin and others. The painters up to this time chose some particular place

because of its beauty and then painted it from notations or from memory, but in their studios, with plenty of time to add or embellish it as they pleased; but our men had no time to do this at a *café* or on a street corner; they painted anything that gave them a painting sensation, anything that particularly suggested light or movement. This made a vast number of subjects paintable that had never been thought to be so before.

During these few years before the war between France and Germany, their greatest object was to see how things appeared in broad daylight. As they painted familiar scenes they saw that everything and every person was surrounded by air, by luminous dust, by the delicate vibrations that envelop all objects exposed to the fires of out-of-door light. They saw the atmosphere change momentarily the appearance of things. They saw a thousand and one things, while they looked at nature, but the

thing that interested them most at this time was the ambiancy of air. They tried to paint it, to suggest it. They tried to represent man enveloped in ambient atmosphere, in the ever changing light of reality, to catch the incessant mobility of the coloration of light.

They were by no means the first to feel this desire to surround people and things with air or to show the luminous dust, the reflections, the delicate enveloping vibrations, for these problems were not unknown to the old masters; no one has rendered ambient atmosphere better than Pieter de Hoogh. There is a Carpaccio and a Veronese at the Louvre and a Canaletto at the Museum at Turin, where clear golden light plays deliciously on the rose casings of the Ducal Palace, that are, when one makes allowances for the effects of time, examples of what the men of the *Café Guerbois* were struggling to express. Possibly the difference between their efforts



PORT DE LA ROCHELLE, AQUARELLE ET GOUACHE

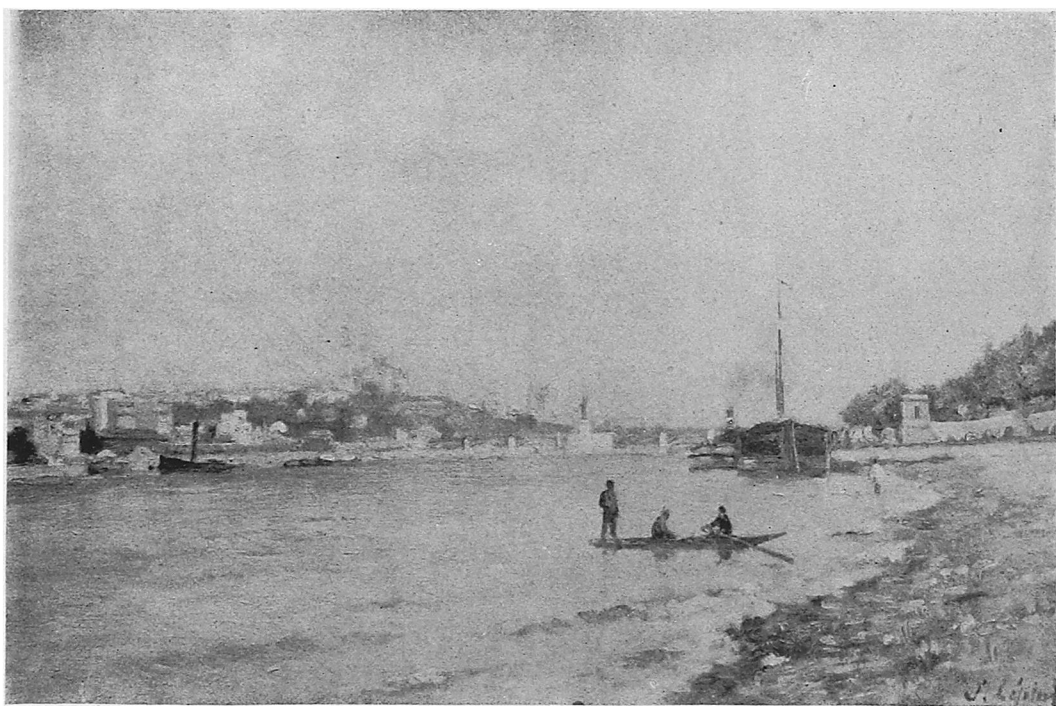
By Albert Lebourg

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais



TEMPS DE PLUIE
By Albert Lebourg

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais



LA SEINE À PASSY
By Stanislas Lépine

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais

and those of the old masters was that the moderns realized the complexities of the problems that confronted them.

They agreed among themselves that everything in nature was a succession of perspective planes and surfaces that join on to one another; that the successive surfaces are limited only by the luminous vibrations; that nothing had a hard, exact contour; there were no edges in nature; there was always a hesitation between the relief, however acute it might be, and the surrounding air. To wish to determine each object by line, which isolated it from its natural surroundings, was an error only permitted in certain decorative work. That all things were seen through the vibrations of atmosphere that drowned details and blended the object with the atmosphere; that painting should not outline objects by a conventional handling which sharply detaches them, but that objects should be so treated that from the lighted parts of a figure to the shaded parts, even to the deepest shadow, the light should insensibly diminish without one being able to determine the precise point where it appears to leave the figure.

They said line was an artificial element since nature does not have it, so *à bas* with line! They painted in masses, not edges. They made their drawing more expressive by shade than by contour.

Rembrandt, Velasquez and others have fine examples of blending the figure with the atmosphere in direct opposition to the old Germans, who limited their figures

by outlines, and who regarded drawing as the principal medium of their art, color being but an agreeable accessory. This love of the old Germans for line comes from their propensity to idealism, and to the preponderance of thought in their painting. For them color is the sensuous element of their art, while drawing alone defines the meaning and the intellectual design of the painter. The idealists have always preferred the line, a human medium, and the realists, faithful to nature exclusively, have always preferred color.

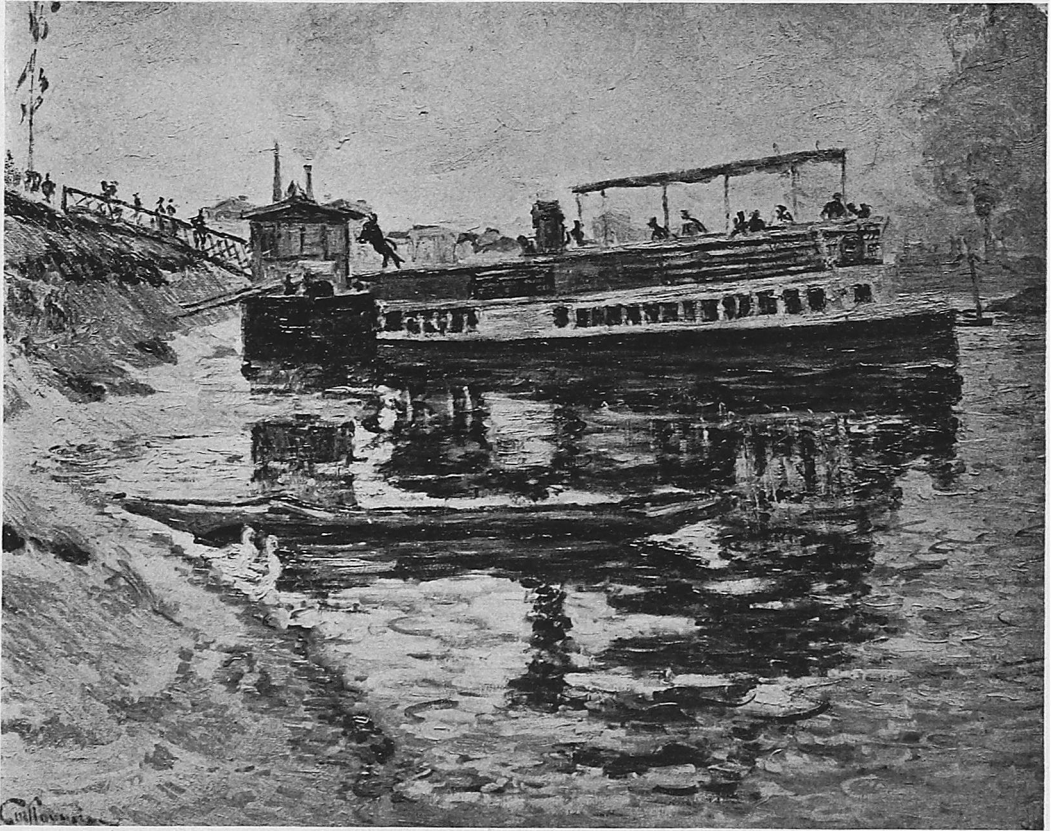
Our men, extremists always, went so far as to say, at least Claude Monet did, that drawing was an error, an artificial means of determining form. When they told Manet he could not draw, he would say, "I do not draw silly lines as they are taught in the schools; but I challenge any of the illustrious professors teaching there to obtain an effect of light; they cannot do it. I defy them to do it! What do they know of atmosphere, of the mobile light that envelops everything around in its dazzling



LA CHASSE AUX PAPILLONS

By Berthe Morisot

—Collection Moreau—Courtesy Musée des Arts Décoratifs



LE BATEAU-MOUCHE
By Armand Guillaumin

splendor? Ask this of the people who stick a face on the canvas just as one sticks a butterfly into a case."

And referring to a portrait by a fashionable painter, he exclaimed, "I can see he has painted an overcoat, an excellent, well-cut overcoat. But where are the lungs? The model does not breathe beneath his clothes; he has no body; he is simply a tailor's figure."

This doing away with line carried them to an extreme in the simplification of their design, but never to the violent extremes their followers have practiced. So taken up with technical difficulties were they, that they were regardless of lines, of composition; they had no time for picture-making; their achievements were not intended for pictures, but for studies. Pissarro said,

"Execution! We regard it as nothing; it is at any rate only unimportant, art having nothing to do with it."

They were not influenced by the desire to evade difficulties, as many of their followers are accused of being, for they were consummate draughtsmen, as many portraits, figure pieces, etchings and pastel-drawings amply attest. You will remember many of them passed years of their lives in academic study. They painted largely by the mass, which comprised simplified light and shade, and by the suppression of infinite detail (which they said in place of accenting the truth of expression, drowned it); they tried to reproduce the natural colors of day and sunlight. In arguing that sunlight was the creative source of color, they affirmed the sover-

eighty of light and it is possible the name Luminist might have been more applicable to them than the name Impressionist, which was given them four or five years later.

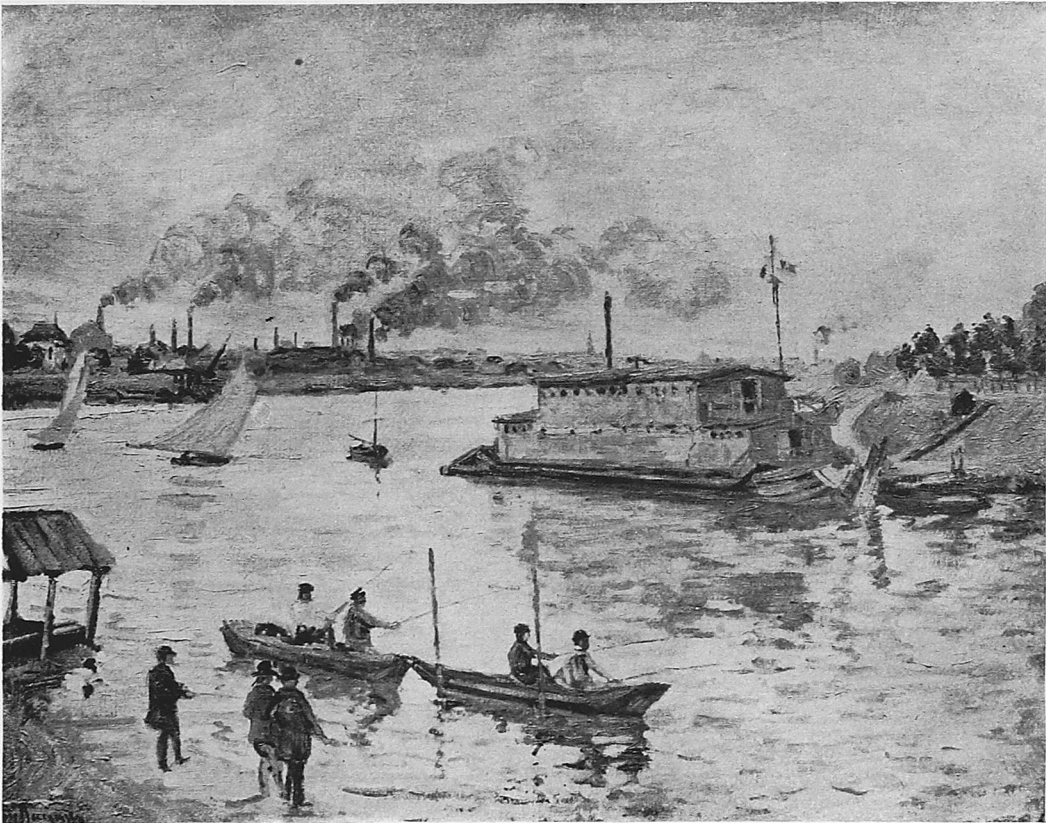
Radiant light formed their tocsin call. It seems strange that their advent came with the introduction of bounteous light into every part of our modern homes, and a doing away of the old schemes of sombre coloring. The tones of the old masters seem like dark shadows and are incongruous among the dainty furnishings and bright flowers of the modern house. They need the dignity of high ceilings and rich decorations, a *milieu* difficult to find, at least in America, today.

But as I was saying, the subjects were nothing; execution was nothing; the one all-absorbing theme of conversation and ex-

perimentation was light. It was all light, light draws as well as colors an object and light put each object in its place, giving it its proper value. An outcome of this study of out-of-door light was the strict observation of the "law of values." The old painter merely painted relative values in a more or less arbitrarily determined scale; while the Impressionists undertook to paint absolute values in a very wide range, plus sunlight, as nearly as they could get it.

The Spaniards, Italians and Dutch were by no means neglectful of this law, but Manet and his associates saw with the increased sensitiveness of our modern eyes and followed the laws more scientifically than the ancient masters.

The result of their efforts was an intense and direct impression, the abbrevia-



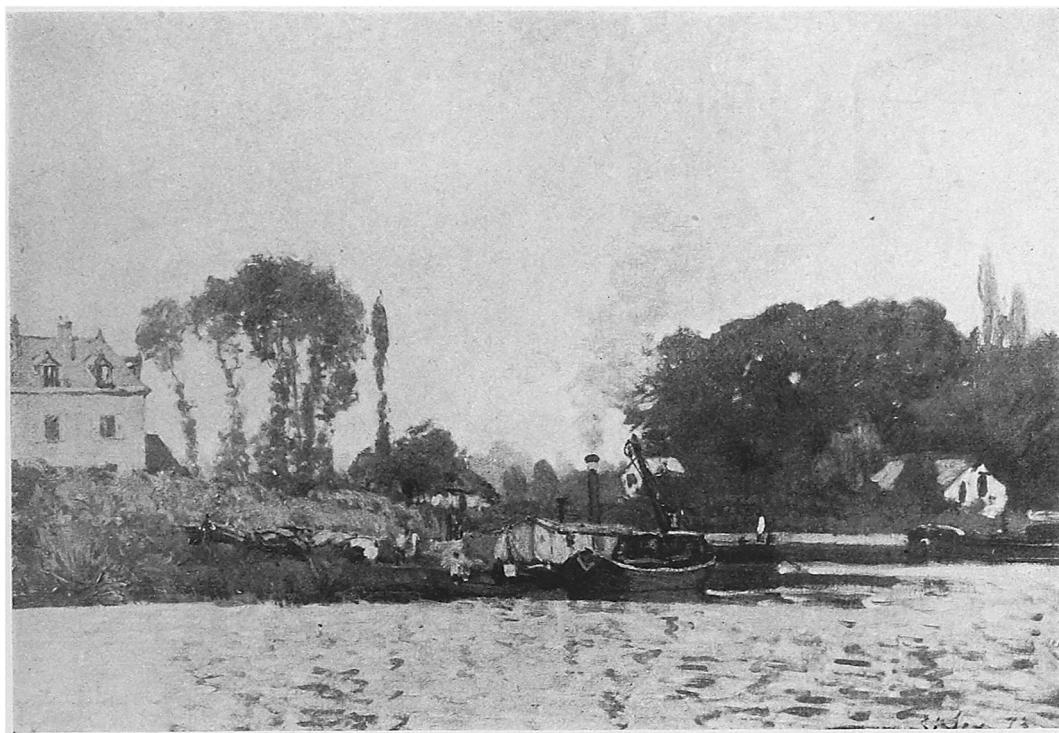
LE SEINE A CHARENTON
By Armand Guillaumin



TEMPS DE NEIGE, RUE DE VILLEG. 3
By Camille Pissarro



DANSEUSE
By Pierre-August Renoir



BATEAUX A L'ECLUSE DE BOUGIVAL
By Alfred Sisley

—Collection Moreau—Courtesy Musée des Arts Décoratifs



COUCHER DE SOLEIL A LAVACOURT
By Claude Monet

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais



"A MA MIE," SCENE DE CABARET
By Toulouse-Lautrec

tion of their drawing, the simplification of their figures, the treatment of all objects as masses and not as outlines. Their pictures of this time show how intense was their feeling on these subjects. Manet's are particularly strong in the subject of nature seen in flat masses. "*Olympia*" is an interesting study of the distribution of values. The lights, the sheet, the flesh, the empty sack are all of one value. The face of the negress, the background, the bottom of the shoes, the black cat, are of another value. The black cat shows us the strength of all the dark values, and by this one can judge how strong all the other dark values are. In "*Olympia*," Manet used such brilliant oppositions that the color was destroyed, for in a strong light you get brilliancy and color is destroyed. It is eaten

up just as broad daylight diminishes the local color.

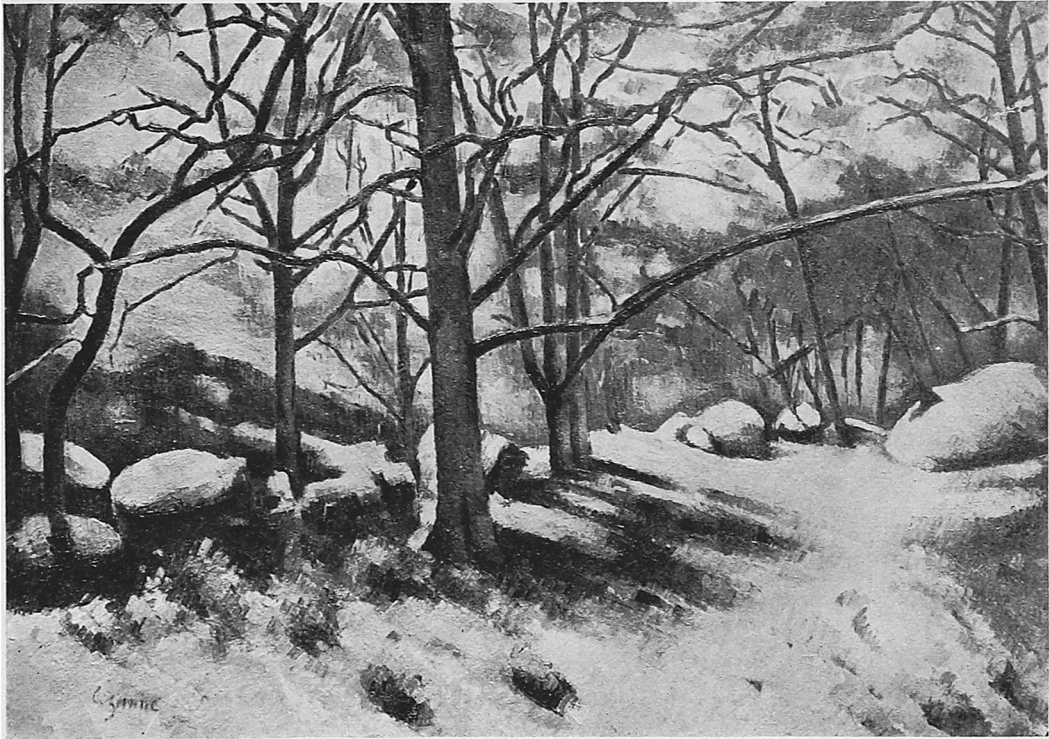
It was Manet who tried to create the impression of the thing seen by massing, the flat appearance of nature, the ambiency of the air. At this time it was he who forged ahead of the others and opened the way for them to follow, but Claude Monet has since carried the idea of lost contours to the last word. His ideas on drawing are extreme; he sees the world only as a subject of light and today he gives the impression only, not the reality of the things themselves, but their ambiance and the changes that they submit to under the atmosphere that surrounds them. But in his pictures of this time, *Marines*, *Déjeuners*, and several garden scenes, there was nothing strikingly startling, although even at

this early date it was not the face or the person that interested him, but the clothing and accessories that gave him the opportunity to paint effects of light and color.

In his portrait, "Camille," the green and black rays of the skirt, in Japonaise the brilliant red dress with its embroideries and the Japanese fans pinned on the wall back of her. They were the real subjects of the picture. In the harmony of the decorations, in the dresses of the women, in the bits of ribbon in their hair, in the creamy white shades, in the old pieces of brass and glass or fragments of frames, in the Japanese screens, in the flowery figures in the carpets and in the brocade coverings of his furniture; in all these accessories he shows his eye to have been more sensitive than that of Courbet. The light plays in his interiors even though his design and brush are a little heavy.

From 1866 he dropped figure subjects and confined himself to landscape. He had been in very good repute among the officials, they even hung two of his marines on the line at the Salon, until he was inoculated by the germ of Impressionism, this captured him body and soul, and he has never recovered from the effects. To this day the analysis of light absorbs him.

Using personal vision as a guiding rule Manet and his friends soon were trying to express what they saw. They now had light tones, free from shade, that allowed them to put on canvas the brilliant colors they saw around them. They painted the spots of light that the sun in passing through foliage threw on the ground; they painted the juicy greens of spring, not the greens that memory fixed, but as they saw them in morning sunlight, in shade, in full noonday sun, tones that were absolutely



EFFET DE NEIGE
By Paul Cézanne

—Collection Claude Monet



LA LEÇON DE DANSE
À L'OPÉRA DE LA RUE PELETIER
By Edgar Degas

—Collection Camondo

dissimilar, just as the flesh tones are not always rose but are determined by the light falling upon the flesh. They found there was no fixed color whatever as objects have no colors of their own, but only that which is given them by reflection of the sky and the enveloping atmosphere. They found it impossible to say with the indoor painter that objects had permanent color. They could see and prove to their own satisfaction that the outline, the color of an object painted indoors differed absolutely from the outline and the color of the same object painted outdoors.

One scientific truth after another was discovered, and talked over. One would excitedly tell the others that a tree nearby was green, while five hundred feet away it was bluish because of the density of the luminous layers of air surcharged with the reflections of the illuminated blue of the sky, and that it was really the atmosphere that was the real subject of the picture, for

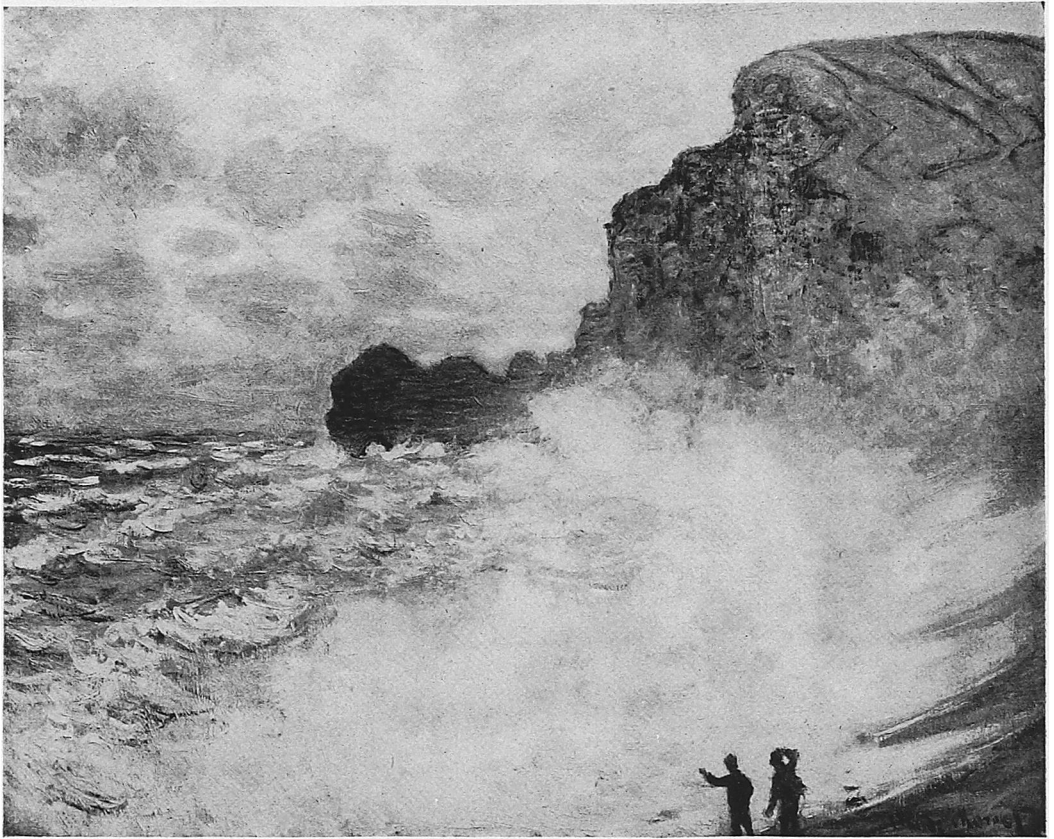
whatever was represented on the canvas existed only through the medium of atmosphere. Another went still further and said that the sense of heat, of luminosity, of what one might call the vitality of the atmosphere, was conveyed by color.

Their efforts all centered on the study of the variations of atmosphere and light. Their aim was to reproduce these reflections so as to give the exact impression of the color of the objects they looked at. A great part of their time was given to the discussion of these reflections and to the composition of the atmosphere between the painter and the object. Oh those were interesting days! They were getting so warm, so near to so many discoveries, that the days and nights were not half long enough. Then one day it came to them that shadows did not mean the absence of light, but rather light of a different value. In other words, colors continue their vibration in shadows, weakened, but still ex-



RACE HORSES
By Edgar Degas

—Courtesy Boston Museum of Fine Arts



PAQUET DE MER À ÉTRETAT
By Claude Monet

istent. As soon as their eyes were opened to this fact of nature they saw that their own shadows were as false as those painted by the ready-made tones of bitumen and black of the past. Possibly they tried the experiment of holding up a really dark object and seeing that what looked by contrast with brilliant light almost black was really a faint purplish tone. Then they discovered that the landscape in the distance reflected the color of the sky and the clouds above it, sometimes so completely that the local color was practically absorbed. When the sky was blue, and the clouds light and scattered, a cloud shadow often looked bright blue; if the clouds were numerous and purple, the same piece of country would assume their purple hue,

solely from the influence of the light reflected from above, while in the foreground the upper surface of every leaf and blade of grass was tinged with the color of the sky.

They all seem to have grasped the colored shadow effects with avidity, for very soon we find Renoir giving a general violet tint to both people and things. As example of this there are two of his pictures at the Luxembourg, "*le Balancoire*," and "*Le Moulin de la Galette*," or "*Bal à Montmartre*," as it is often called.

Sisley bathed his landscapes in rose or violet. Pissarro and Claude Monet painted effects of snow and hoar-frost, with blue shadows. They all tried their hand at painting snow for there they found playing

the simplest sky reverberations. They all but Manet, who waited until 1880, introduced blue and purple into their shadows, as light conditions necessitated, with almost as much variety in color as in the illuminated parts, thus gaining in color, luminosity, vitality, and atmosphere.

During five hundred years or more shadows had been painted without color, except by a few artists scattered through the centuries. There was Turner, who introduced into his drifting mists, blue and purple shadows many years earlier; Reynolds who painted some few rich shadows, and Mr. Moran speaks of seeing a few colored shadows in old pictures at the Metropolitan Museum. In one, of the fifteenth century, "The Deposition from the Cross," by Antonello de Messina, he says there are purple shadows of buildings behind the figures and blue shadows among the peaks of a snow-capped mountain in the distance. In Frans Hals' portrait of his wife there are grayish-blue shadows in her wide, ample collar and her cuffs, and also in the collars of two portraits by Rembrandt. Mr. Moran tells of a not unusual experience he had in speaking to a roomful of people of the blue shadows in a Twachtman, as being true to nature. The audience objected. He took them to the window to show them the blue shadows that were kindly at hand cast on the snow, thinking he would prove his assertion without any difficulty. No one of them had ever previously observed the color in shadows on snow. Some could not even see it then.

There is no doubt that many of us are like Mr. Moran's friends. We have never thought of shadows on snow or any other surface as being anything but neutral in color, or violet tinge. The truth is that the quantity of gray and purple in nature is surprising. Purple when rich and deep is a noble color and when paler it catches the eye strongly, but its use is dangerous to the

painter unless it is subdued in line and faded with green or brown.

If people of today have not become accustomed to blue and purple shadows, imagine how the public must have been annoyed forty odd years ago, when they saw for the first time the purplish tint of many of the Impressionist pictures. When we speak of the public being annoyed, excited, etc., against any one artist, we must remember that in those days the number of people at all interested was small, and for that very reason the interest was more intense. The Salon in those days was not the colossal thing it is today, with its thousands of exhibits, but a small affair. It was not until 1855 that they had much more space



ÉTUDE POUR "DON JUAN" DESSIN

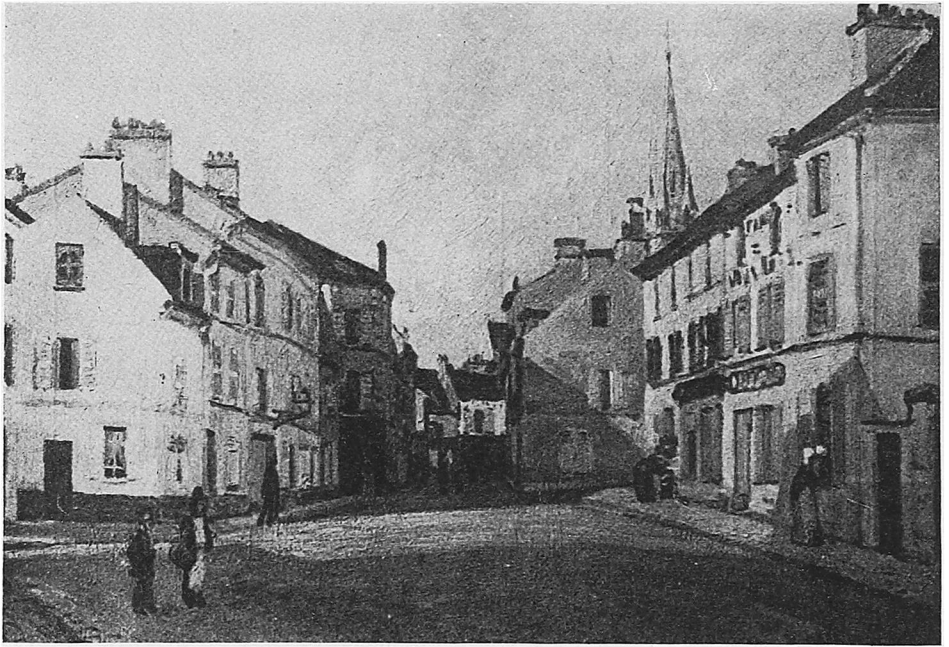
By Félix Bracquemond

—Courtesy Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit-Palais

than a very large room and only two classes attended it, those who went because it was the thing to do, and a more limited number still, those who were really interested. It is only since 1863 that the Salons have been held every year. Up to that time, they were held every two years.

As I was saying, the purple and blue shadows were a shock to the public. They

had examples of them in the Louvre, but "having eyes, they saw not." It was the same with colored shadows as with "cleaning the palette," and other things that will come up later. The Impressionists were not the first to see them, but they were the first to deduce from their discoveries certain scientific statements that opened up the road to something new in painting.



PETITE PLACE À ARGENTEUIL

By Alfred Sisley

—Collection Moreau—Courtesy Musée des Arts Décoratifs